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Que Ondee Sola- July-August 1995

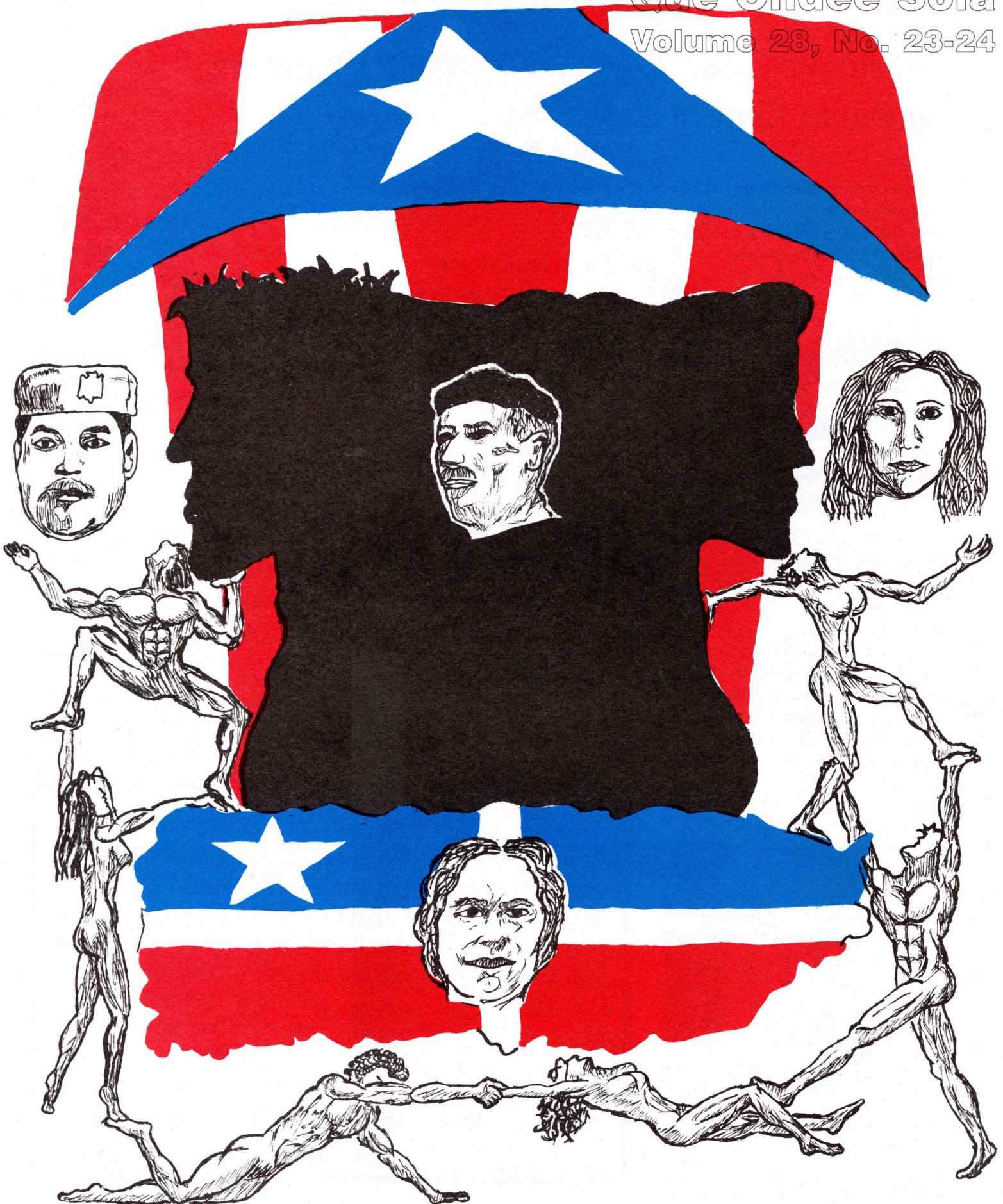
Eduardo Arocho

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About the Cover by Daniel Cordero

The muscular bodies represent the struggles and efforts that must be emphasized in maintaining a sense of identity and community within, as well as, outside the island.

Our sense of community is dependent upon focusing on the youth within it. Our youth learns from role models of the past and present. From these role models they can establish a sense of identity. It is particularly crucial to pass on the importance of organizing together to build the same community in which they were raised.

The four role-models depicted in the drawing, are placed —with in the silhouette: Juan Antonio Corretjer to display the impression that they have on the minds of the youth, outside the silhouette. Arturo Alfonso Schomburg (left), Julia de Burgos (right)— to represent that role-models must be made obvious (to our youth) through education and active participation in the community with "La Isla" through these role models.

The flag is another connection that we brothers and sisters on the mainland have to our parents homeland. This connection with our roots is the shelter, which nurtures the growth of the spirit and knowledge of the self — represented by the flag draping over the other aspect of the drawing.

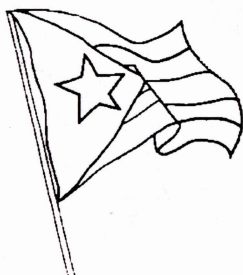


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Que Ondee Sola

is published at Northeastern Illinois University. The opinions expressed in Que Ondee Sola do not necessarily reflect those of the administration. Responsibility for its contents lies solely within the staff. We appreciate and encourage any and all suggestions.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Que Ondee Sola would like to dedicate this issue to the living history of Puerto Ricans everywhere. We will not just focus on the greatness of individuals nor contain the history of Puerto Ricans solely to Puerto Rico. Instead we will attempt to focus on how Puerto Ricans, where ever they are, unselfishly and bravely contributed to changing the Puerto Rican condition by voicing and expressing their personalities, uniting to build a Puerto Rican community and to changing their colonial situation.

We therefore would like to cover four individuals who have made remarkable contributions to Puerto Rico's history, culture and struggle for self-determination. Among them are two women, Lolita Lebron and Julia de Bourgos and two men, Juan Antonio Corretjer and Arturo Alfonso Shomburg. These people contributed what they had, whether that meant poetry, collecting rare books on African history in the Americas or even their life for

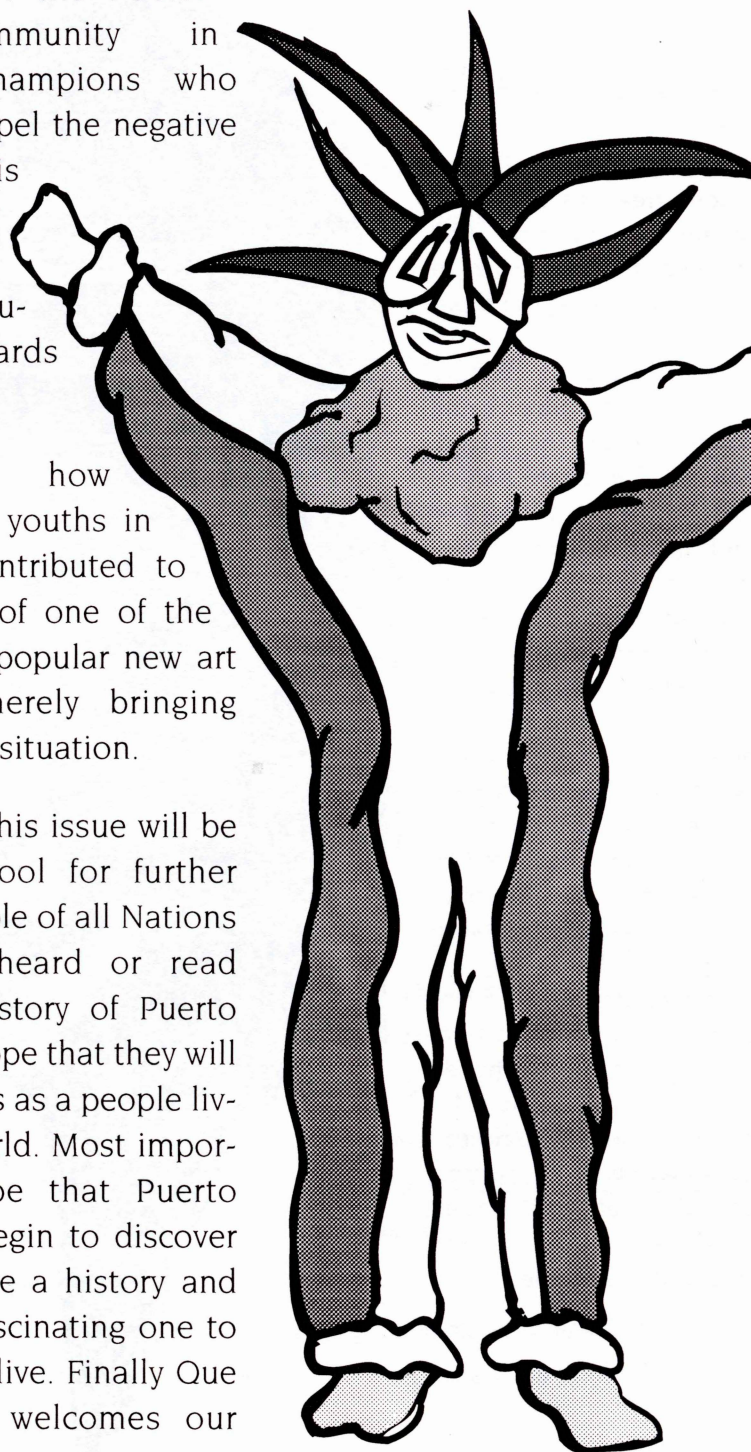
the freedom of their nation.

Then there is an oral history by one of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago's champions who helped to dispel the negative image of this community and build a positive institution towards change.

Finally, how Puerto Rican youths in New York contributed to the creation of one of the worlds most popular new art forms by merely bringing voice to their situation.

We hope this issue will be used as a tool for further study by people of all Nations who never heard or read about the history of Puerto Ricans and hope that they will understand us as a people living in the world. Most important we hope that Puerto Ricans will begin to discover that they have a history and that it is a fascinating one to discover and live. Finally Que Ondee Sola welcomes our

new co-editor Daniel Cordero. Thank you and enjoy.



Julia de Burgos

Julia de Burgos is recognized as one of Puerto Rico's greatest poets. Born in 1914 to a poor family, she made great sacrifices to obtain an education. She traveled to New York in search of work, as did thousands of others Puerto Ricans, forced to migrate due to impossible living conditions on the island. She was an active participant in the labor struggles and independence movement. Unable to find work and oppressed by the same severe exploitation and racism that faced people on the Island. She was an active participant in the labor struggle and independence movement. Unable to find work and oppressed by the same severe exploitation and racism that faced people on the Island, she began to drink. The alienation and loss of cultural identity that affected her so deeply are part of the colonial conditions that continue today. Julia de Burgos' early death at age 37 was an irreplaceable loss to the Puerto Rican people.



To Julia de Burgos

The word is out that I am your enemy
that in my poetry I am giving you away.
They lie, Julia de Burgos. They lie, Julia de
Burgos.

That voice that rises in my poems is not
yours: it is my voice;

You are the covering and I the essence;
and between us lies the deepest
chasm.

You are the frigid doll of social
falsehood
and I, the virile spark of human
truth.

You are the honey of courtly
hypocrisy,
not I;
I gamble everything to be what I
am.

You are but the grave lady,
lady-like;
not I; I am life and strength and
I am a woman.

You belong to your husband,
your master, not I;

I belong to no one or to everyone,
because to all,
to all I give myself in pure feeling and

in my thought.
You curl your hair, and paint your face,
not I.
I am curled by the wind,
painted by the sun.
you are the lady of the house, resigned and
meek,
tied to the prejudices of man, not I;
smelling the horizons of the justice of God.



I am Rocinante, running headlong.

You don't even rule yourself;
everybody rules you;
your husband rules you, your parents,
your relatives,
the priest, the designer, the theater,
the casino,

the car, jewels, banquets, champagne,
heaven and hell, and "what will people say?"

Not me, because only my heart rules me,
only my thoughts; the one who rules
in me is me.

You, flowers of the aristocracy, and I, the
flowers of the people.

You have everything in yourself
and you owe it to everybody,

whereas I, my nothing I owe to
nobody.

You nail to the static ancestral
dividend,
and I, a one in the numbers of
the social divider

we are a duel to the death,
which nears fatally.

When the multitudes run joyously
leaving behind ashes of burning
injustices

and when, with the torch of seven virtues
the multitudes run after the seven sins,
against you and against all that is unjust
and inhuman,

I will go in the middle of them with
my torch in my hand.

Blacks, Latinos indebted to Pioneer

Roberto Rodríguez & Patrisia Gonzáles

Alongside Africanist Marcus Garvey and other 20th-century giants of African-American history stands Arthur Schomburg—the creator of the premier African-American historical documents collection in the country.

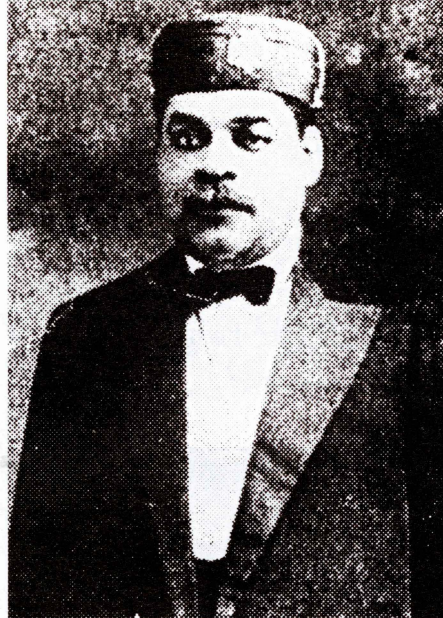
The Schomburg Collection houses some of our nation's most important books, documents, newspapers and other historical materials relating to African and African-American history. Schomburg (1874-1938) is credited with being the first person in the United States to create a collection that stresses the centuries-old and universal struggle for black liberation and equality.

"The collection represents the most complete source of Africana anywhere in the world. It has no peer," says Molefi Asante, chairman of the African-American Studies Department at Temple University. Historically, the collection has been used not just by civil-rights leaders but by African leaders involved in liberation movements. "It gave them intellectual firepower," he says.

Unknown to most people, Arthur was actually Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, a native of Puerto Rico. As a young man, Schomburg was a member of a revolutionary party that fought for the independence of Puerto Rico and Cuba. In Puerto Rico, he began to collect historical books and documents on blacks in the Caribbean and continued to do so when he moved to New York City in 1891. There, he identified with blacks and viewed himself as a black Puerto Rican.

Much of Schomburg's work was based on the fact that much of Caribbean and Latino culture has been shaped by black hands says José E. López who teaches Latino and Caribbean history at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

The literature, music, arts and food of the Caribbean are shaped by the third root of the Americas — the African root," says Lopez. He also credits the continual slave revolts during



the colonial era of North and South America with helping to forge a culture of rebellion in Latin America.

Schomburg grew up at a time when vestiges of slavery were still very present. It was also the era of mass migration of African-American from the rural Jim Crow South to the industrial and inhospitable North.

At the turn of the century, pseudo-scientific theories of white genetic supremacy thrived—theories used to justify discrimination and violence against non-whites. These conditions produced mass struggles for equality and an intellectual movement that rebutted those now generally discredited racial theories.

In the early 20th century, Schomburg and Garvey, who was born in Jamaica and who led the "Back to Africa" movement, promoted the idea that Africa is the motherland of all blacks.

Schomburg, a self-educated scholar, wrote for many of the leading black newspapers of the time. As a lecturer, writer and historian, he played an integral part in the Harlem, or Black Renaissance of the 1920s—a vibrant cultural

movement that produced some of America's finest writers, novelists, artists, poets, musicians and scholars such as Langston Hughes, Garvey and Josephine Baker.

Schomburg came to be considered one of the world's leading authorities on black history. He is credited with introducing the written works of Caribbean black intellectuals, writers and poets particularly from Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Jamaica—to the United States.

Most of Schomburg's writings and social activism centered on Afro-Latino in both Latin America and the United States and was aimed at reaching the average black, including Harlem's Caribbean black community. Owing to his command of the Spanish language, publicity for the many events he helped promote were bilingual.

In the 1920s, he helped found the Negro Society for Historical Research. His primary objective was to reclaim black history that had been left off the pages of history.

The first collection of books and documents were housed at his residence in New York. Later it was relocated and renamed. Today, the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature and History is housed at the New York City Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem (515 Malcolm X Blvd., New York, N.Y. 1003 212 491-2200).

The general research and reference collection alone contains 125,000 volumes and is an international treasure representing the democratization of knowledge—of recovered and preserved history and stands as a testament to the often unacknowledged connections between African-Americans and Latinos. *Roberto Rodríguez and Patrisia Gonzáles are based in El Paso and write a weekly column syndicated by Chronicle Features P.O. Box 370394, El Paso, Texas 79937. This article first appeared in the El Paso Times, Sunday, February 26, 1995.*

SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE

The Schomburg Center for Black Culture of New York Public Library is generally recognized as one of the leading institutions of its kind in the world. This Harlem-based modern research library collects, preserves and provides public access to information and resources essential for documenting the history and cultural development of peoples of African descent worldwide. A cultural center as well as a repository, the Schomburg Center also sponsors a wide array of interpretive programs, including exhibitions, scholarly and public forums and cultural performances. Its collections number over 5 million items, including over 3.5 million manuscript items, 125,000 books and 300,000 photographs. Rich collections of periodicals, posters, art objects, films, videotapes, audio recordings and memorabilia are

also counted among these holdings. Resources materials are organized by format and access environments for its unique holdings: General Research and Reference; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books; Photographs and Prints; Moving Image and Recorded Sound; Art and Artifacts.

The new Schomburg Center complex, a 75,000 square foot, three-building facility is located at Harlem's historic crossroads: 135th Street and Lenox Avenue. In addition to state-of-the-art study and storage facilities for the five collection divisions, the facility also houses a 75-seat theater / auditorium, a 350-seat auditorium, a 30-seat screening room, an exhibition hall and a gallery. The exhibition and cultural programs held in these venues interpret the Center's rich and diverse

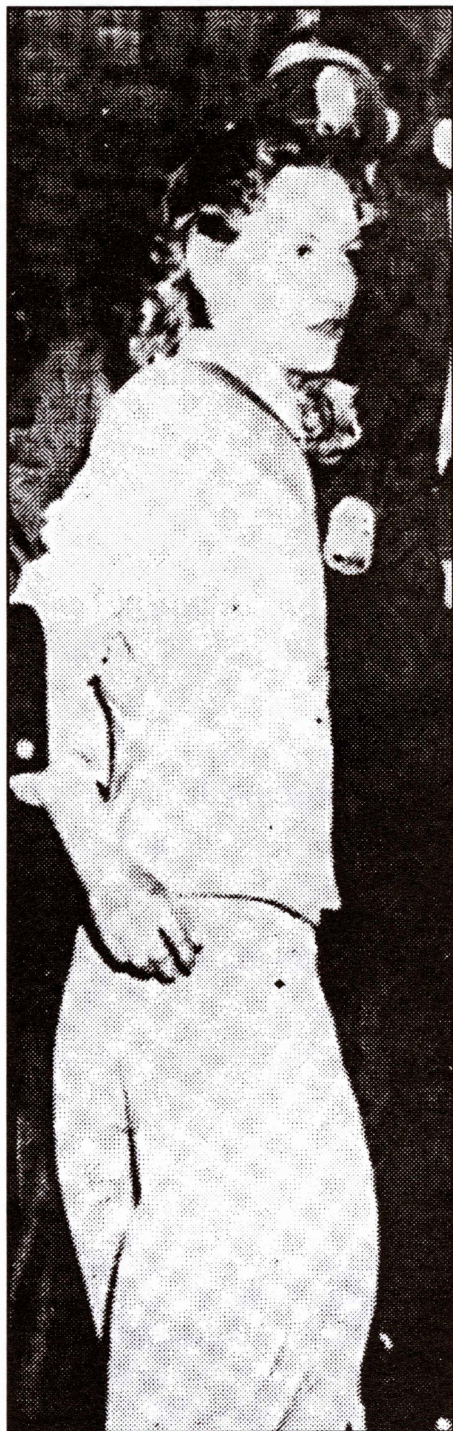
collections by focusing public attention on issues and themes in the global African experience.

The Center currently sponsors over 50 public programs annually that involve virtually every segment of the population that has an interest in its resources. They provide opportunities for community leaders, schoolchildren, senior citizens, scholars, and artists to meet and engage each other in reflection, discussion and celebration.

For information about Schomburg Center research services and programs and Schomburg Society membership, call or write:

The Schomburg Center for
Research in Black Culture
515 Malcolm X Boulevard
New York, New York 10037
(212) 491- 2200

about **LOLITA LEBRÓN**



On March 4, 1954, Lolita Lebrón led Irvin Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda and Andrés Figueroa Cordero in an attack on Congress. They fired shots into the house of Representatives, unfurled a Puerto Rican Flag, and Proclaimed "Que Viva Puerto Rico Libre!" This action was in response to intensifying colonial attacks on the independence movements, especially the imposition of Commonwealth status. In the midst of a U.S. campaign to prove to the world that Puerto Rico was no longer a U.S. colony, the Nationalist actions shouted out that there was an active and militant independence movement on the Island and in the U.S.

Lolita was born in the Town of Lares, where the first proclamation of Puerto Rican nationhood was made in 1868. In a statement from prison Lolita explains some of her earliest understanding of the destructive impact of U.S. colonialism:

"As a little girl, I went to school and learned to place my hand over my heart and pledge allegiance to the U.S. My classmates were very pale and sickly looking children, mostly all barefoot and in rags with swollen stomachs, skinny bodies and were nervous and uneasy. One day I heard myself saying, if I could make a better world, I would make it- a world where hard-working oppressed people would be free."

"At 21 and amidst a very difficult life of suffering, I was advised to do as other women of my country were doing to sail to New York where there would be more opportunities. My life in New York grew to a greater understanding of human oppression, exploitation and

negation. I had to deny I was Puerto Rican in order to get a job."

Lolita was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole for the action against the U.S. Congress. She served 25 years in prison, many of them spent in solitary confinement and with severe physical and psychological harassment and torture.

Her commitment to the struggle to free her nation helped to keep her strong and militant during her years in prison. She actively supported progressive struggles inside prison and participated in a hunger strike in support of the Attica rebellion.

Lolita, along with the other three living nationalist prisoners, was unconditionally released in 1979 by Jimmy Carter. This was a result of the growing Puerto Rican independence movement and Puerto Rican solidarity movement, as well as the military and political actions by the clandestine organizations which consistently demanded their freedom. In the U.S., communiqués accompanying F.A.L.N. armed actions always made release of the Nationalists a primary demand.

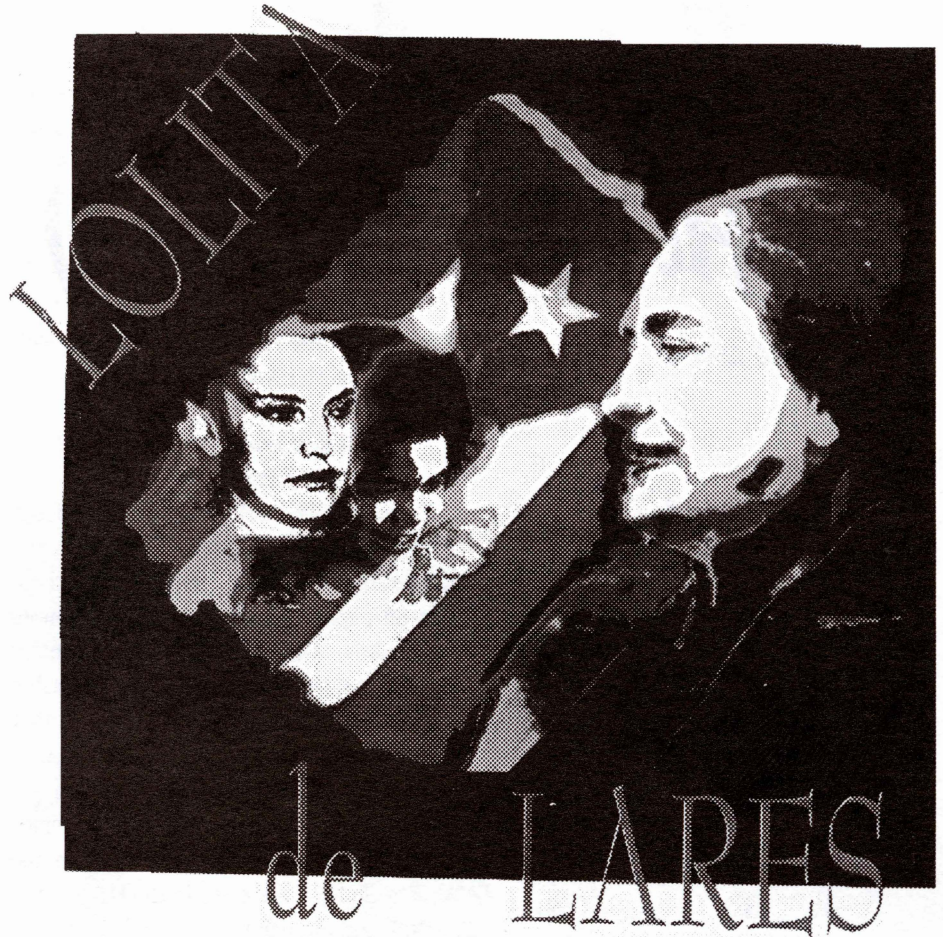
As a leader of the Nationalist Party, Lolita continues to fight for independence. She participated in the campaign on the island of Vieques against U.S. Navy occupation and toured the U.S. in 1980 in support of the 11 Puerto Rican Prisoners of War.

This summer a unique project took place at the Latino Chicago Theater, the result being a "Jeffrey Award" nomination. This project was called "Lolita de Lares," a play by Migdalia Cruz on the life of Lolita Lebron.

This play was based on another play written last year by members of the Latino Chicago Theater Company called "Dolores", which had more of a political tone to it. Migdalia Cruz took on the project and added her artistic talents as a writer to create a magnificent piece for the theater. The play had a unique form of bringing to life different periods of Puerto Rican history and combining it with scenes from Lolitas life. The play literally walked the audience through each scene with the help of a sarcastic and witty American tour guide. The play was filled with music, dancing, poetry and folklore that was filled with the pure essence of Puerto Rican.

The audience was more than just entertained and awed by the artistic qualities of this play, but they were also moved by the plays political and historical messages. Whoever saw this play and new nothing about Puerto Rico's struggle for self-determination, I'm certain were awakened and fascinated by the plays deep portrayal of this period which is not only the history of Puerto Rico but also the unacknowledged history of the United States.

Among the hardworking cast members was one of Northeastern's own students Daniel Sanchez. Daniel, like many of the actors, played several roles including Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos. He is a very talented actor who did a magnificent job. There were two actress who played the role of Lolita Lebron. One was Maricela Ochoa who played an older Lolita and the other was the beautiful Justina Machado who por-



trayed Lolita as a girl and as a young woman.

This was the play that drew up the largest attendances and publicity at the Latino Chicago theater and also received the most acclaimed performance. "Lolita de Lares" a definite hit that has longevity written all over it..

Playing next at the Latino Chicago Theater "Cigarettes & Moby-Dick" also by Migdalia Cruz, preview dates November 3rd and 4th, Opening date November 9th. For more information call the Latino Chicago Theater at (312) 496-5120.

Lolita de LARES

*Reviewed by
eduardo arocho*

Boricuas Also in Hip Hop History (Part 7)

by *eduardo arocho*

In my spare time I enjoy searching for evidence of the Puerto Rican Diaspora's mark in history. I became curious at the mention of Puerto Ricans and Latinos in several books on the subject of Hip Hop and rap. These books include *The Last Black Mecca: Hip Hop*, by Robert Scoop Jackson and *The Rap On Gangsta Rap*, by Bakari Kitwana. Both mention the fact that Puerto Ricans and Latinos had some involvement in Hip Hop's origins but none goes into details as to who or what they contributed. Other mainstream sources have totally ignored the "Latino elements" to Hip Hop and portray it as solely a Black inner-city product. This view of course does no justice to African-Americans, Latinos or Hip Hop Culture. So it is up to Puerto Ricans and Latinos to place themselves in history by writing and talking about their role and not relying on someone else to do it for us.

To help set the record straight I decided to ask "Latin Empire", a Puerto Rican Rap duo from the South Bronx. Latin Empire has been rapping together for fifteen years. They were performing at a few places here in Chicago, where I caught up with them at the Hot House, to do an interview. I found out they were accompanied by Professor Juan Flores who teaches at Hunter College in New York and is the Director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. He happened to be in town lecturing on the role of Puerto Ricans in Hip Hop and he is also writing a book on the subject. So I decided to interview him first to get an academics view on the matter. We sat down in the small band lounge at the Hot House for the interview while in the background "Puerto

Rock" and "Krazy Taino" were bustin-out with some Spanglish rhymes.

What is your experience with rap and why do you study rap?

I'm not a rapper. I like rap, not all rap. But I started studying it in the early 80s. In the context of the work I'm trying to do on theories on popular culture, street culture more particularly, in trying to differentiate popular culture from mediated culture, from television and advertisement and so forth. I think that they tend to get confused and mixed up with one another and I believe that there still is a popular culture that is a culture that comes from people, that comes directly from the streets. So I got interested in Hip Hop, first in graffiti, and through that gradually into rap. I started writing about rap in 1983.

From your perspective what are the origins of rap?

There are social origins, in the sense that it emerged from the youth basically from a post-industrial situation in the South Bronx, when the industry was moving out and the neighborhoods were being emptied of a working class population that was a white working class population. A state of abandonment was beginning to prevail and it's under those conditions that young people began to respond to the emptiness of their neighborhoods that they lived in and gave voice to their position through rap. So socially, it emerges in the South Bronx and in Harlem as an actual musical form, although it was a daily practice by young Black and Latino and working class kids for a good decade before it emerged as an actual musical form. Musically, it emerged from a whole combination of different things in the African-America tradition; it's always

been pointed to the dozens, Rap Brown. Rapping it ultimately goes back to the Blues tradition. But other currents fed into it, in terms of Caribbean Jamaican dubbing (or dub-poetry) and sound systems and I'm trying to emphasize the role of Puerto Rican music in the background and Puerto Rican vocal styles and the presence of Puerto Ricans in the very early, very beginnings of rap as it emerged as a musical form.

What are the contribution of Puerto Ricans to this music?

First of all, the language that from early on, even before rap was being recorded commercially, there was Spanish that was part of the rap discourse. That was whiped out once it became commercialized, anglicized and made monolingual. But I have recordings, tapes and testimony from people that were involved early on, not only Puerto Ricans but non-Puerto Ricans as well to attest to the actual language input.

In terms of the musical styles you have the deep percussive style of the Puerto Rican Bomba that ultimately can be traced as a source into the music. Then, the vocal dexterity in all of rap has its roots in Puerto Rico, especially in *Plena*. They have a style called *trabalengua* which is like a tongue twister type of style and when you listen to that and you listen to some of the ways in which "Latin Empire" and some of the other Puerto Rican rappers go to it there's definitely a lineage there that is either conscious or subconscious, or what have you, that precedes through. I played tonight at the Ruiz Belvis Center some recordings which illustrate the way in which salsa, the musical sounds of bongo and Latin styles infused the early styles, parties and jams and stuff before the beginnings of recorded rap in the early 80s. So there is evidence and it's there. People pickup on it like Queen Latifa and Big Daddy Kane, they acknowledge that by actually having alot of salsa in their raps and even doing stuff like "Nice and Smooth" actually putting Spanish words and getting Latin and Puerto Rican kind of lingo into their rhymes even though they're not Puerto Rican.

Is there a separate Puerto Rican style now or has it all merged together with the mainstream?

Well, they have Latino rap which emerged about 1990 and that didn't specifically include any Puerto Ricans in terms of the superstars. You have "Kid Frost", "Mellow-Man-Ace", "El General" and "Rico Suave" (Geraldo) these people that made it in rap aren't Puerto Rican. The question then becomes is their specifically a Latino style of rap—which I don't really believe there is. Bilingualism I think, is the particular fascination. Musically, I don't see anything particularly distinction, except they tend to put more like "Mellow-Man-Ace" puts a lot of rumba and guaguanco into his rhymes and that's true of him, but I don't think that you necessarily have to be Latino in order to put afro-Caribbean salsa types of sounds into the rap. I feel that when it got commercialized and

when it became disengaged from its original social base which was the Black and Puerto Rican working class kids in the Bronx and in Harlem, it began to lose distinctiveness along national lines and ethnic lines and along neighborhood lines and it became more and more kind of melted together into these generalized commercialized type of styles. I think that's really what has happened and why those people like "Latin Empire" get sort of dropped out of the picture and get ignored as part of the varied history of rap as a musical form.

Why aren't Puerto Rican rappers in the mainstream?

Ultimately, it has to do with political reasons and that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States and that anything colonial winds up getting regulated, omitted or lumped into something else. Puerto Rican cul-

ture somehow always seems to fall through the cracks and gets thrown into some larger mish-mash of stuff and loses its distinctiveness. I think that's because colonized countries tend to have their cultures and histories diminished as a result of the dominant history and the dominant society.

How do the Puerto Rican rappers exist now in New York and is there a significant rap movement in Puerto Rico?

Yes, definitely in Puerto Rico, it landed in 1987. Plus the Nuyorican people coming from the Bronx and moving back to Puerto Rico started it, and it picked up and then indigenous island rap began to develop—the lyrics began to refer to specific conditions in Puerto Rico. Using Puerto Rican slang they weren't just translations from English, they weren't just trying to be reproductions of what was going on in New York, but they began to take



going on in New York, but they began to take on their own dimensions, especially in words, in lyrics, and in language. Musically, I think it's pretty poor and it got commercialized immediately there was no lag time in between its emergence and when it got picked up by the media. You have superstars in Puerto Rico like "Vico C" and "Lisa M" who are millionaires they've made a whole lot of money as a result. Whereas "Latin Empire" are basically poor guys and they've been doing this for fifteen years. So there is rap in Puerto Rico which is actually the most important and most popular style among Puerto Rican youths on the island—it's far beyond the popularity of salsa or anything that we call Latin music. People that use to like rock or salsa are all gravitating now towards rap as the most important musical language among the Puerto Rican youth today.

In New York there's just constantly the appearance of Puerto Rican Rappers. There's a lot of new groups that have come out, some only rap in English, some mix in Spanish and so forth and they're always popping up. Hidden in the cracks of some of the most famous groups are Puerto Ricans. Nobody knows about it or they just don't make anything out of it, but it's there. Whether there is a distinctive Nuyorican style is very hard to say, because "Latin Empire" is really the best example. I think they have their own particular way of doing rap—nobody else is doing it like them. But that's really only one group, there's not a Puerto Rican rap movement in New York as far as I know. There are mostly separate people, dispersed, not knowing each other and not thinking of themselves as part of a whole.

Is rap music exported throughout Latin America?

The Latin Americans like to pick up on the rap in Spanish. "Mellow-Man-Ace" was really popular along with "Kid Frost". "El General" was the one who conquered Latin Americas moral through raggae rap and dance hall Jamaican style rap. But he's Panamanian and alot of the blacks in Panama are from the West Indies or have West Indian back grounds.

It got through to Latin America I think largely through "El General" and that kind of raggae rap and then it got mixed in with more traditional Latin styles. Some of the best known Latin Salsa groups now have raps as part of their repertoire and they bring rappers on their performances. I'm talking about "El Gran Combo", "Conjunto Libre" and quite a few others. And theres a whole genre of "merengrap" which is merengue-rap it's really big in the Dominican Republic.

"I think the future is that people are gonna eventually get back to where the hell it all came from, and begin to pick up on how it really sounded, when it was a direct expression of peoples lives in the communities..."

That must be real fast.

Very, very fast rap. A very exciting kind of rap, alot of times the lyrics don't say very much, but it's a very exciting kind of style that is very danceable and very fast. There are some very popular little cassette and tapes that have come out that is terrific stuff. It's not that well known out side of Latin America, but merengue has become very much a Latin American style and it's accompanied now just as raggae is by rap. It's part of the lingo of the style that even folkloric Puerto Rican and other Latin American groups have picked up on rap and included them. There's a group "The Pleneros de la 21" in New York which is a traditional Folkloric Bomba and Plena group and as part of their repertoire they have rap in it. I've been trying to get some of the old style rappers even before Latin Empire like "TNT" and "Charley Chase" I've tried to hook them up together with the Pleneros because I think it would make a great combination and bring

about a new kind of unity in the history of Puerto Rican popular music. Its something that to some extent we have to build, its not something we just let happen. Bring people together, suggest, contact, suggest commonalities of musical expressions and put people together. I mean I've gotten some of the pleneros together with some of the rappers and they really get along great and there's all kinds of future.

What do you think the future of rap music is?

I think the future is that people are gonna eventually get back to where the hell it all came from, and begin to pick up on how it really sounded, when it was a direct expression of peoples lives in the communities, and realize the quality of that stuff compared to alot of the commercialized, mediated rap that came after wards. Some of which is quite good, but it's pretty limited. I think alot of it is really very crummy. Merengue, just as anything becomes really crummy when commercial interests take over and begin to control the way things sound and move. I think there will be an interest in recuperating some of the lost time and space in the history of rap and people that want, that and demand it will begin to discover the quality of rap in the early stages of groups like "Grand Master Flash". To me, that was poetry of our times—we miss it. The fact that amnesia sets in towards this stuff in our kind of society is so structured the way it thinks that you're supposed to forget it as soon as it gets off the air. As a historian of culture, you can't do that. I'm constantly alert to those things that get lost in the cracks.

I wouldlike to thank Professor Flores for his time and information. Please keep an eye for the interview with Latin Empire. They are Ricky Rodríguez or "Puerto Rock" and Anthony Boston or "Crazy Taino".

Towards an Understanding of Corretjer:

Some Personal Reflections

José E. López

During my lifetime, I have had the honor and privilege of having made the acquaintance of people who, for better or worse, have shaped part of world events. I met David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister; Lyndon Johnson; Richard M. Nixon, Ernesto Cardenal; Minister of Culture under the Sandinista government of Nicaragua; Paolo Freire; the internationally acclaimed Brazilian educator; numerous authors, Belaunde Terry, ex-president of Peru; members of the British Parliament; leaders of the Soviet Parliament; members of the legislatures of Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia; Ricardo Alarcón from the Cuban Foreign Ministry; Ambassadors from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Indonesia, Iran, Syria, Iraq and many others. But none has left a more indelible mark on my thinking and actions than Juan Antonio Corretjer.

Juan Antonio Corretjer, considered Puerto Rico's National Poet, was indeed a man for all seasons. Born on March 3, 1908 in Ciales, Puerto Rico, his early youth was the life of rural, 19th century, small-town Puerto Rico, inheriting from it its values, its legacy of resistance and its historical sense of national identity. For it was in Ciales, on August 13, 1898, that Puerto Rican nationals declared the independence of the island both from Spain, and the invading United States Army. It was in Ciales where some of the most significant battles were fought during the Spanish-American War. And it was in



Ciales where Juan Antonio Corretjer's grandfather had been a conspirator against Spanish colonial rule. So it was rural Ciales of the turn of the century and its people who taught Corretjer to love and cherish his eternal mate—Puerto Rico.

He received no real formal education outside of a grammar school experience in the one room school house in Barrio Fronton, Ciales. He taught himself Puerto Rican history as well as world history, art, music and literature.

He was an avid reader and a prolific writer. In his lifetime, he wrote more than 50 short stories, ten essays and more than 20 poetry books. Upon deciding to give up everything, "hasta la poesia le di con el codo" (I gave even poetry the shoulder) to follow the heroic Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos—but most importantly, "por seguir la estrella" (to follow the star) of an independent Puerto Rico, he established himself in San Juan to work 24 hours a day for the Nationalist Party. Albizu Campos had assumed the Party's leadership in May

1930. Corretjer, along with other young Puerto Ricans who did not see the University of Puerto Rico as the island's academy, literally formed their academy on the streets of San Juan. These young Puerto Ricans met everywhere and anywhere to discuss "poesia y revolución" (poetry and revolution). They, a new generation of Puerto Ricans emerged from the very bosom of the quest for a national identity, a national culture. These were very trying times for the island—economic catastrophe, poverty, hunger, suffering; but this new generation was not to be stifled. A cultural renaissance was literally unleashed—new schools of Puerto Rican music, poetry, culture and history were emerging.

Albizu Campos, the young Harvard graduate served as that generation's inspiration and convoked the youth and Puerto Rico as a whole to rise, to challenge the empire, to do away with the lethargy of colonialism. Sugar cane workers, small merchants, priests, nuns, lawyers and doctors, students, peasants—all were awakened by his call. Albizu with his young lieutenant, Corretjer, began to place the Puerto Rican people back onto the pages of history. The dangerous memories, often transmitted through oral tradition in the decimas, began to be written into the new chapters of the Puerto Rican national epic.

To this day, no one can really discern where the thoughts of Albizu ended, and the thoughts of Corretjer began. Such was the nexus between these two men, that Albizu would write in 1950, not long after having expelled Corretjer from the Nationalist Party for his socialist leanings, "If Corretjer decided to become a traitor today, the people of Puerto Rico on their knees could not repay him. In Atlanta (while they were in prison there), they tortured and mistreated him (Corretjer)

more than I, because in him they saw my successor."

Both Albizu and Corretjer captured the essence of our homeland. That is

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why Corretjer could write: "he escrito poesia con la conciencia de que soy el eco, que soy el reflejo, que soy la conciencia de algo que existe, de algo que ha existido antes de mi y en la cual intermedia mi pasión entre ese pasado

***"Their lives were so
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y ese futuro. Debe corresponder a que el legado generacional sea cada vez más fuerte." (I have written poetry with the knowledge that I am the echo, the reflection, the conscience of something that exists, of something that has existed before me and in which my passion intermediates between that past and that future. Accordingly, the generational legacy should be stronger each

time.) They awoke our people to a new reality, and to new possibilities. For that, they both paid a heavy price: personal impoverishment, imprisonment; isolation, and even attempted assassinations. Their lives were so intertwined that it appears that history had chosen them to dream the same dreams and face the same adversities. Albizu, the teacher, died in 1965. Exactly twenty years later, in 1985, Corretjer, the student, would die.

Corretjer however, lived to bridge a new generation of independentistas with the old. He lived to serve as a beacon for a new level of struggle—la nueva lucha por la independencia. (The new struggle for independence)

It was the seasoned Corretjer, already in the winter of his life, that I had the honor to meet in 1975, a decade before his life filled with struggle, and void of worldly possessions, came to an abrupt end.

The day I met Corretjer is one of the most significant days of my entire life. Even though I had met many an important figure on the world stage, the only one that compares to my encounter with Corretjer was meeting Lolita Lebrón. I met him at La Casita, an Episcopalian Center at the University of Puerto Rico, where a meeting of the campaign to free the Puerto Rican Nationalists political prisoners was being held. Upon meeting him, I explained the nature of our visit to Puerto Rico. He told me he had heard of our work, and had read a book I edited, Puerto Rican Nationalism: A Reader, which he felt was an important compendium in English on Puerto Rican Nationalism. Immediately following the conversation, he took out his wallet, and with the reverence of a devout Christian handling a religious object, he took out a small, folded piece of paper. With that same rever-

ence, he unfolded the paper and handed it to me. It was a wanted poster of Carlos Alberto Torres which the FBI had posted in the Ponce Post Office. I looked at it, smiled, and handed it back to him. He took it, folded it and replaced it in his wallet with the same reverence.

This was the first, of many, lessons Corretjer taught me: revolutionary figures, particularly those that are willing to give up everything for a noble and just cause, must be given their due respect and support. I went to jail soon after for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement, just as Corretjer had done so heroically in 1936 for refusing to turn over documents of the Nationalist Party. The reverence for those who dared to struggle, those who dared to pay any cost for our independence, was so characteristic of Corretjer that in 1950, he was jailed even though he had been expelled from the Nationalist Party and had no ideas of the Party's revolutionary activities; he was jailed in 1962, in Mexico when President Kennedy visited that country, for being a Puerto Rican independentista and being perceived as a threat to Kennedy's life. He was jailed in 1971, in a FBI-police orchestrated set-up, accused by one of his closest comrades. Each time he was jailed, he did his time with reverence, respect and dignity, never allowing the politics of victimization to guide his life or his actions. He truly felt that in a colony, being an advocate of independence was "crime" enough to be considered a subversive—the very idea of overthrowing the colony is a subversive act.

Before Frantz Fanon wrote it, Corretjer knew that decolonization was a violent act: "...decolonization is always a violent phenomenon... decolonization is quite simply the replacing of a certain 'species' of men (women) by another 'species' of men (women)" (Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*)

Commitment to an independent Puerto Rico and the creation of a just society, combined with his reverence for Puerto Rican revolutionaries, were

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part of his life until his last breath. The zeal with which he pursued the campaign to free the Nationalists, William Morales and all Puerto Rican political prisoners and POWs is still vividly inscribed in my memory. His lonely voice in the wilderness defending the likes of Pablo Marcano Garcia and Nydia Esther Cuevas in their takeover of the Chilean Consulate in San Juan, the martyrs of Cerro Maravilla, the

underground movement and its organizations, the FALN, the Macheteros, the Voluntarios, the FARP and the CRP has not been replaced by anyone even ten years after his death.

Corretjer also had an uncompromising belief that only Puerto Ricans could and should define the form and content of our struggle, even at the cost of alienating his friends in the left in the US, and even worldwide. No one revolutionary model could be imposed on the Puerto Ricans. Only Puerto Ricans could develop their own paradigm for liberation.

He lived and died without any worldly possessions. Never owning his own home, sometimes lacking food to feed himself and his beloved Doña Consuelo; sometimes suffering in solitude some of the ingritudes and individualism of his fellow independentistas.

Despite all the pains, the sufferings, despite the rejection by many in his family, despite the COINTELPRO attacks by the FBI, despite the political struggles inside and outside the Liga Socialista, Juan Antonio Corretjer—the great Sandinista, the great Guevarista, the great Albizuista—could declare to the four winds with stoicism and steadfastness: "Que la independencia de Puerto Rico para mi es una verdad, una realidad y la he vivido, porque yo soy libre. Los yanquis no son amos mio." (That the independence of Puerto Rico is for me a truism, a reality, and I have lived it, because I am free. The yankees are not my masters.)

Notes from a Community at Work: An Interview With Carlos Ortiz

By **eduardo arocho**



This article is not your usual interview with a celebrity or world leader; instead it is an oral history on the building of a community by one of the people who has dedicated a decade or more of his life to changing the conditions and the odds of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago, from one of being hopelessly entrenched at the bottom of the social structure to one of hope and viable possibilities.

Carlos Ortiz, a teacher, community activist, Puerto Rican and gay man is one of many individuals who have dedicated themselves to the remarkable task of creating a community out of nothing. His story is not only a personal one but it is also the story of a community which has overcome overwhelming odds to not only change its condition but also to survive. The Puerto Rican community laments Carlos's return to Puerto Rico. But we will always have a welcome mat out for him.

What did you do when you got to Chicago?

I was a teacher in Puerto Rico already and I came here with my grandmother. She came to visit her family and while we were here, I was offered the opportunity to work here as a bilingual teacher at Lakeview High School. My grandmother returned and I stayed. But in my mind, I wanted to be here mainly because of the gay issue. Being gay in Puerto Rico was a huge problem because of the level of homophobia and lack of opportunities. I was not able to express myself the way I wanted to. Being a teacher in Puerto Rico put a lot of pressure on me to be in the closet. In reality, I have never been in the closet and that created a problem for me.

When did you realize you were gay?

All my life I have known I'm gay. I think since I was six years old, I knew there was something different about me.

Did people know when you became a teacher that you were gay?

They knew because in Puerto Rico, I was open about my sexuality. I was having affairs and going out with people and hanging around with other gay people in my home town. Because we were few, maybe only five or six gay people openly hanging around, then everybody knew about it. The only problem is that my family refused to deal with the issue and face the reality that they had a homosexual in their family. That put me in the position of leading a double life—one as a gay person and one as a professional—a family member to be respected and treated in a different way.

Did you experience discrimination by your family or other people in your town?

Both. I think that my father, who was a gym teacher in Puerto Rico, put a lot of pressure on me with the rejection and all the other situations that come with being gay in a very male chauvinist, homophobic society. He died six years ago. He entered the baseball hall of fame in Puerto Rico, and coming from that background, people expected different things from me and the pressure from friends, family, and people who were related to my father in that sports arena was always present.

How did things change when you got to Chicago? Was the pressure less?

The pressure was less, but then other realities came into play. For the first time I realized I was not only gay but Puerto Rican. The problems being Puerto Rican—a black Puerto Rican in the United States are worse. I remember living by Devon and Rockwell, and living with my family, and my cousin, she's married to a white American, and when I came to live with them, the landlord asked me to leave, to move because he thought that my cousins were white Puerto Ricans and to see a black person in the building created a huge problem. That was my first encounter with racism against Puerto Ricans and black people and that added to the other issues. The issue about being gay well, was different but then I experienced racism within the gay community. That brought other issues into perspective. Then came the process of coming to understand my political beliefs and how seriously I take them. Also being independentista, how people see people who are independentistas.

Were you already an independentista?

Yes.

How did you get involved with the community and with the Cultural Center?

The first time I came into contact with the Cultural Center was around 1980 with the arrest of eleven Puerto Ricans in Evanston, because I knew one of them, Ricardo Jiménez, since 1976. I started visiting him at Joliet and the FBI started visiting my neighborhood and my neighbors in my building. I came to the Cultural Center to try and find some support to better understand the whole thing around the Eleven. But at that time, the level of homophobia created a problem and I left. I was there about one month or two, then I disappeared. I felt that I never wanted to go back there because of all the issues I had problems with.

Then around 1987, I came back. The issues at Clemente were happening and I looked for support from the Cultural Center. They supported us and I started doing work.

How did you get to Clemente from Lakeview?

I was a teacher at Lakeview from 1974 to 1979. I asked for a transfer and I went to Clemente from 1979 to 1981. In 1981, they closed my position at Clemente and I was transferred to Benito Juarez High School. I was there from 1981 to 86. In 1986, I taught summer school at Clemente and the principal at that time, Mr. Sosa asked me if I wanted to come back to Clemente. I said yes and I was there from 1986 to this year 1995. Then around 1987, it was the publication of an article in the Reader Newspaper and as a consequence of that article, we created different meetings and activities and we contacted the Cultural Center and that's how I started working with the Cultural Center.

Who was "we"?

Mainly bilingual teachers from Clemente, about twenty or thirty teachers all together. I met Marcos Vilar and Marvin García through these activities. Mainly through Marcos, I started to do work with the Cultural Center, then with Marvin, and then I ended up being the Coordinator of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners for four years. I also became one of the leadership of the MLN at the national level.

How about your involvement with VIDA/SIDA?

When I started doing work with the Cultural Center, they were already in the process of talking about a program around HIV and AIDS.

Was that an opening for working with gay people or was there already accep-**tance with gay people about AIDS?**

No, because they had already, through the MLN, had discussions about gay issues and in their program, had a position about gay and lesbian liberation and I already knew about this when I came back, I read the position and I was very pleased how open they were about dealing with the gay and lesbian issue. I realized that they changed from the first time that I had met people from the Cultural Center. It gave me an opportunity for the first time to be able to be gay and do political work the way I wanted to do it. The first opportunity was the VIDA/SIDA program. They wanted to start the program and I was given the opportunity to develop the program and the other people involved, the males were all gay and the women were lesbian and bisexual—that gave us an opportunity to do outreach in our community and I think that a lot of gay men started coming to VIDA SIDA and VIDA SIDA gave us the opportunity to do outreach not only in the Puerto Rican community in West Town and Humboldt Park but also to take the issue of the Latino HIV and AIDS to the Chicago area, we were involved in demonstrations city-wide.

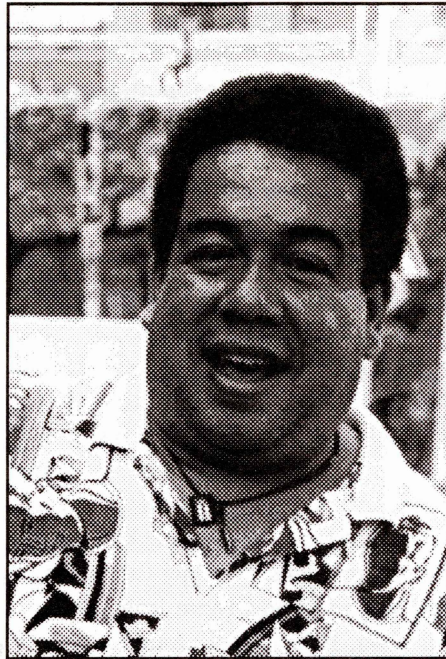
Around what year?

We're talking around 1989. We were involved in demonstrations one of them was when the CTA started putting ads in the buses and trains related with HIV and AIDS. There were a lot of problems of how they portrayed the whole issue and we did a demonstration related with that. We met with a group of Puerto Ricans from New York in VIDA SIDA and we went to Puerto Rico and we took the issue of HIV and AIDS and the situation in Puerto Rico mainly in San Juan, to the open and we did demonstrations in Puerto Rico and we educated people who had been working in Puerto Rico, we went to bars, we went all over San Juan teaching people how to deal with the issue and I think that we raised the

level of awareness related to HIV and AIDS and changed how people view that issue. VIDA SIDA also went to Montreal to the International Conference around AIDS, I participated in New York, San Francisco and in other cities talking about AIDS and its reality in the Puerto Rican through VIDA SIDA, we did a gay presentation at Columbia College, Loyola, University of Illinois Champaign, University of Indiana and others,

So, many universities...

Yes, I was interviewed for the registration in Toronto for the whole of Canada, it became an international program that people- its a model that people liked, people said that it was a community based organization but then in the first years of VIDA SIDA we had no support, no money, all the expenses came from our own pockets. We created a lot of contacts throughout the community and then maybe around four years ago, we started writing grants, and it was when we were awarded money for our program through CDC, the federal government, the state and the city and that is how VIDA SIDA became the program it is today. The respect that VIDA SIDA is getting through all the efforts that through the years, we established in this community. I think that we earned a lot of respect, we see a lot of agencies in our community dealing with the HIV-AIDS issue, but I think that we were one of the first ones that started from nothing, we did our work for years without any money, we got chiropractors and acupuncturists and they did everything volunteer, no money was involved. When we started, people helped us. For me, it was an interesting experience since a lot of my friends that have since died, came to VIDA SIDA to get treatment and giving them the opportunity to talk, to remember our past, things that we did before. Also the opportunity for them to see some kind of family



atmosphere for them, and when some of them died, I recall getting calls from their family members saying that for these people, being in VIDA SIDA was one of their main objectives in life when they were alive. Some of them used to call for treatment just to sit there and talk because they saw, you know, enough friends for the support that they needed in the last stage of their lives. And that's what VIDA SIDA is all about.

Were you openly gay in school and if so, how did the students regard you?

One of the things I was very open about in Clemente the second time around when I came in 1986 was number one that I was doing political work and I realized that I had to be open about who I am because I did not want people to use my sexuality as a situation to try to bribe me or to try to put me down or the FBI to say "oh, you're gay, let's do something with that" I became very open about it. I discussed my sexuality in a faculty meeting, a lot of people, a lot of friends thought in the beginning, that it was a big mistake but nine years later, hey, we proved it was not a big mistake because I earned the respect of the students, the teach-

ers, the parents, the community, I was able to be myself there with no problem. Granted that once in a while you are going to find somebody that is going to try to put you down but I think that was maybe- I can say that in nine years if I had more than three problems that was a lot. Incidents, not more than three. Most of the time when teachers or counselors had students who were dealing with their sexuality, I was asked if they could talk to me or if I could talk to them and I did. I think I helped with that. I think I helped teachers deal with their own sexuality and now that I'm no longer at Clemente, a lot of people approached me and thanked me for being open because that helped them deal with their sexuaity, a lot of people were afraid to show other people their feelings because they were afraid of rejection. Through me, they realized that they don't have to worry about it.

We created a program this last year at Clemente, a support program for youngsters who are dealing with their sexuality, many gay and lesbian. I hope the program will continue. Because I was able to do what I did with the issue of sexually transmitted diseases or HIV and AIDS at Clemente. I think Clemente was one of the few schools, maybe the only one, in years that dealt with the issue very openly, for the last seven years we've had conferences, trainings for teachers, training for students, for parents, name it. Also the issue about dealing with gay and lesbian issues, we've had training for teachers and for parents. I've been part of that process and being open has also given me the opportunity to be invited to different groups to discuss about the issue for Casa Horizon to train their volunteers, Stop AIDS to train their volunteers. I've been gay and a member of the Local School Council, I think it was Nightline that had an article that another person in Chicago, also a member of a Local School

Council, we were the first two openly gay people that are in a so called political position, elected officials in the state of Illinois. That for me is very important. With my example, I hope I have opened the doors for others to follow.

You are an active member of the First Congregational Church. What did you do in order to have people, especially in such a conservative setting as a church, be more accepting of you as a gay person?

The Church experience is a good one. I was a Church member in Puerto Rico and I was asked to leave the Church because I was gay. When I came here, I became a member of another Church, it was a United Church of Christ, and a lot of Cubans were in that Church. Again, I was asked in a nice way to change my ways or to leave. I left and then for a while, I was out of the church. Then I met Reverend Jorge Morales through the struggle at Clemente and in the community, and when he was in the process of becoming the pastor of the First Congregational Church, I told him that when he became the pastor I would go back to the church and I did. I became a member of the First Congregational Church. I was president of the council, I was the treasurer of the Church, I was involved in creating the men's group and I was the first president of the men's group.

Through the church and the work of the prisoners, I was able to participate in different activities at the national level of the church and I was able to work with the issue of HIV and AIDS in the church as part of different meetings in Cleveland, in Chicago, and in St. Louis. I think I was in some instances, the only Latino that was part of the group dealing with HIV and AIDS. I think that being openly gay in

the church establishment opened the door for me in the sense of bringing our reality as Latinos to the Church. I think it also helps to bring the issue of HIV and AIDS to the church. At First Congregational Church, we had conferences related with HIV and AIDS, I was able to discuss my sexuality openly with no problem. I think it helped open the door for many people. We had one person who used to volunteer in VIDA SIDA, Marcelo. Marcelo died and I was very pleased when we went to the funeral home to see the people from our church there, because Marcelo came to our church also and talked about his reality. I think that even though people may have problems dealing with gay and lesbian issues and dealing with HIV and AIDS, in the First Congregational Church, we were able to create an impact. I think that when I compare this church with other churches here in Chicago and in Puerto Rico, they are far ahead. Again, I think it says a lot about our community and I'm glad that I was an instrument to help open that door even though other people before me participated in the same church.

Looking back on all the things that you have done, what do you think are the most important?

VIDA/ SIDA. I'm leaving to Puerto Rico and even though I've completed a lot of stuff in my life, personally, and professionally I think that VIDA SIDA is the only thing that I hope will last for a long time. I think of all the love or the energy or the effort that I put into VIDA SIDA to become what it is today and leave knowing that something that is part of you is going to stay behind, dealing with the reality of HIV and AIDS in the Puerto Rican community. I hope that twenty, maybe thirty years from now, VIDA/SIDA is still around and still around with the same principles that it was founded on because I think that it is very important for our community.

We need agencies like VIDA/SIDA whose main objective is the people, it is not to make money its just to save and empower our community, that's what its all about.

What do you plan to do once you get to Puerto Rico? What does the future hold for Carlos Ortiz?

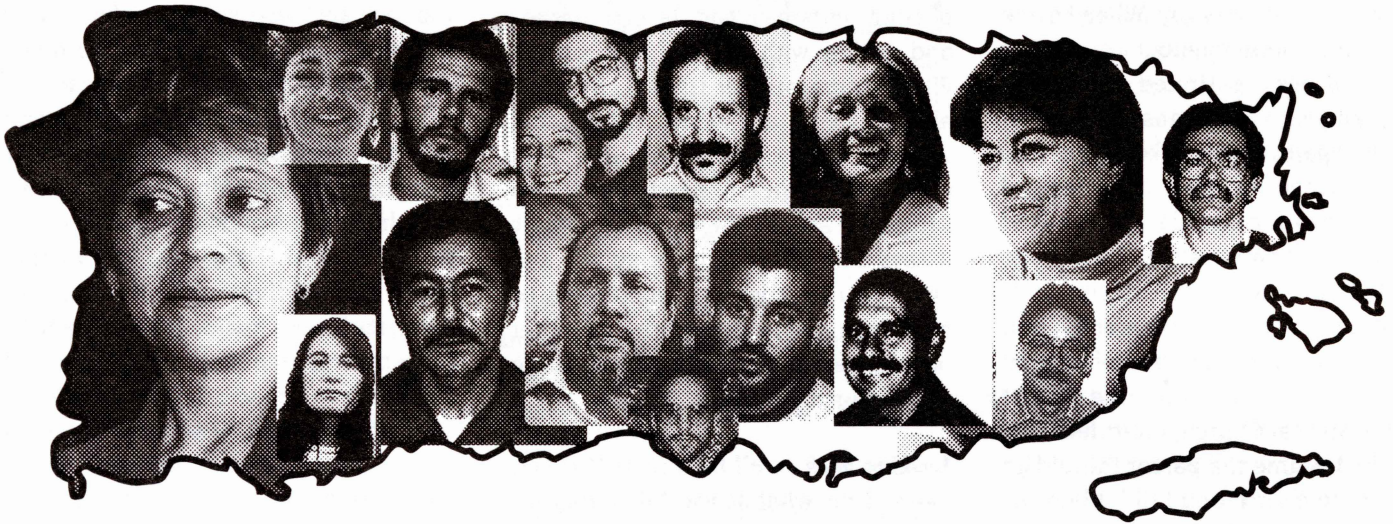
The most important thing is, I want to continue teaching. I have applied for a job, I don't know if I will do that but the main thing that I want to do is to deal with the issue of homophobia and the gay and lesbian issue in Puerto Rico. I think that now that I have a different view, now that I have the strength and I'm more strong about who I am and what I want in life, I want to deal with that issue. I want to help other people that are in the same position I was in more than twenty years ago, to create some kind of network about gay and lesbian issues. I know that there is a lot of support groups, but I don't think there is a commitment that is needed there and I think that's going to be my main goal in Puerto Rico.

Is there anything you want to say to the community?

The only thing that I want to say to the community, especially to the people that I met through my life is this: I'm glad that I did what I did in this community. Especially because a lot of people learned more about gay and lesbian issues and mainly because people saw the human being more than the sexual person. I think that is what its all about to— change people's ideas and vision of who we are as human beings. I think that my contribution to this community has been that. I hope that they will continue dealing with gays and lesbians with respect and dignity, that's what its all about.

International Seminar

**Campaign for the
Liberation of**



**October 13-15, 1995
Puerto Rico**

Puerto Rican Political Prisoners

International Seminar on Campaign for the Liberation of Puerto Rican Political Prisoners

The organizations in Puerto Rico working for the liberation of the Puerto Rican political prisoners and prisoners of war will sponsor an international seminar which will take place in Puerto Rico from October 13 to 16, 1995. The working sessions of the seminar will meet on Saturday, October 14 and Sunday, October 15. Position papers will be presented on the following topics: the political context of the incarceration of the prisoners; the legal context of the campaign; the religious foundation of the campaign; and the psychological impact of prolonged incarceration on the prisoners and their families. Each presentation will be followed by a group discussion. The presentations are scheduled for

Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday morning, an ecumenical service will take place, incorporating Puerto Rican cultural elements. Meetings of the various sectors in attendance (religion, unions, students, women groups, etc.) are scheduled for both days with the purpose of designing a specific action program aiming at strengthening the on-going campaign. A cultural program will be presented on the evening of October 13, and documentaries about the conditions on the island and about the prisoners will be presented throughout the event. Relevant resource materials will be on display.

General Information

SEMINAR COORDINATORS:

Dr. Luis Nieves-Falcón
Tel./fax 809-723-9829

Mr. Carlos Nieves-Sánchez
Tel. 809-722-4224

HOST ORGANIZATIONS:

Comité Unitario Contra la Represión (CUCRE)

Liga Internacional por la Liberación y los Derechos de los Pueblos. Capítulo de Puerto Rico

Ofensiva '92

Campaña pro Liberación
Prisioneras y Prisioneros Políticos
y de Guerra

International Seminar Preliminary Program

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1995

2:00 pm-6:00 pm
Arrival and pick up, Aguadilla
Airport; Registration

6:30 pm-7:30 pm
Cultural event
7:30 pm-9:00 pm
Dinner

Conference Schedule

Saturday, October 14

7:00-8:00 am
Breakfast

8:00-8:15 am
Welcome

8:15-9:15 am
The Political Context of the
Incarceration of the Political
Prisoners

9:15 am-10:00 am
Discussion

10:00-10:15 am
Recess

10:15-11:15 am
The Legal Foundations of
the Campaign

11:15 am-12:15 pm
Discussion

12:15 pm-1:30 pm
Lunch

1:30 pm-3:00 pm
Documentaries

3:00 pm-4:00 pm
The Psychological Impact
of Incarceration



4:00 pm-5:00 pm
Discussion

5:00 pm-5:15 pm
Recess

5:15-7:00 pm
Meeting of Action Groups

7:00-8:30 pm
Dinner

8:30- 9:30 pm
Meeting of Action Groups

Sunday, October 15

7:00-8:00 am
Breakfast

8:00-10:00 am
Ecumenical Service

10:00-11:00 am
The Religious Foundations
of the Campaign

11:00 am-12:00 N
Discussion

12:00 N-1:30 pm
Lunch

1:30-3:00 pm
Meeting of Action Groups

3:00-3:15 pm
Recess

3:15-5:15 pm
Plenary Meeting

5:15-7:00 pm
Cultural Event

7:00-8:30 pm
Dinner

8:00-9:30 pm
Documentaries

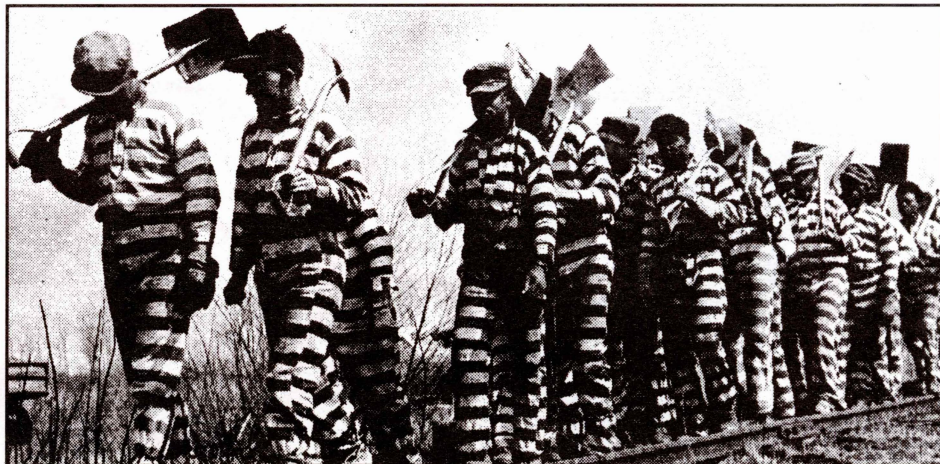
Monday, October 16

7:00-8:00 am
Breakfast

8:30 am-12:00 N
Departure

Mass Incarceration and Control Units: CRIME CONTROL OR SOCIAL CONTROL?

Despite the current climate, or rather because of it, the question "Which side are you on?" has never meant more than it does today. This program is one part of a national organizing effort to combat unit prisons and the racist hysteria facilitating mass incarceration. We urge you to join us and work with us as we declare our side against U.S. insanity and for humanity.



Speakers:

Alan Berkman is a former political prisoner who served two years at Marion and eight years altogether. He has been a revolutionary since the 1960s. As a physician, he has always placed the needs of people first; whether it was at Wounded knee, the South Bronx, Lowndes County (Alabama), or from one of his prisons cells. He will give a hand account of time in Marion, the first control unit prison.

Nozomi Ikuta is a minister with Liberation Ministries, United Church Board of Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ. She is a Coordinating Committee member of The National Campaign to Stop Control Unit Prisons and will discuss the emergence of this new organization and how you can become involved.

José E. López is spokesperson for the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional, Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, and a leading member

of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement. He is also a professor at Northeastern and Columbia Universities and served almost a year in jail for Grand Jury resistance. He will speak on mass incarceration as a social control mechanism of people of color.

Sanyika Shakur is currently a prisoner at Pelican Bay Special Housing Unit (SHU) and will be released this September. Shakur was formerly known as Monster. His autobiography, *Monster*, detailing gang life in LA, was on many best seller lists for several months. He was also featured in the best-selling book, *Do or Die*. While in prison he converted to New Afrikan politics and has since written extensively on the relationship of prisons and white supremacy to the struggle for New Afrikan Independence. He will speak on this struggle as well as the horror of being caged in one of the worst prisons in the U.S.

Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, PO Box 578172, Chicago, IL 60657-8172; (312) 235-0070

Saturday, October 21
7 PM
De Paul University,
Room 154
2324 N. Seminary

donation \$5
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Room: E-041

1:30 PM

Tuesday, October 10

**“The Three Faces of Puerto Rico”:
Taino, Spanish and African**

Tuesday, October 17

**“Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos &
the Puerto Rican National Question”**